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Unit 1002: The Modes and Functions of Discourse.
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The purpose of this 10th-grade unit on language is to pose, for students, basic and tentative questions about the rhetorical uses of language. Examples are provided which designate the modes of language: Daniel Fogarty's story of rhetoric to show language which informs; materials from Northrop Frye to show language which inquires; a John F. Kennedy press conference to show language which persuades; Southerner Henry Grady's 1886 speech to New Englanders to show language which establishes social contact; and Stephen Crane's "War is Kind" to show language which evokes. Students are asked (1) to devise a model continuum of rhetorical discourse which proceeds from exposition to evocation and (2) to rank, according to the continuum, selected materials from the works of Adlai Stevenson, Sterling Moss, Peter George, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Martin Luther King, Jonathan Swift, and Amy Vanderbilt. Procedural notes, sample lectures, discussion questions, suggested student assignments, and examination questions are included. (See TE 001 329, TE 001 332, and TE 001 336 for units on exposition, persuasion, and evocation.) (JB)

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Unit 1002

The Modes and Functions of Discourse

Grade 10

TE 001 328

CAUTIONARY NOTE

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UNIT SEQUENCE

This unit should be taught after Unit 1001, The Nature of Meaning in Language, and before Unit 1003, The Language of Exposition, as it occasionally refers back to Unit 1001 and provides an overview intended to introduce later units on discourse.

PURPOSES OF THE UNIT

While this unit is relatively brief, it serves as an important introduction to several units in the tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades. It is not intended that this unit provide a comprehensive and conclusive survey of discourse. The essential concern, rather, is the asking of basic and tentative questions about the ways in which language is adapted to its purposes by the rhetorically sensitive writer or speaker and the ways in which language is evaluated and interpreted by the sensitive reader or listener. Such questions will be prompted by a general examination of discourse reflecting a wide range of purposes. Looking for a rather general similarities and differences. While a major objective must certainly be the application of concepts, attitudes, and skills to each student's individual situation, this will not be reached in the course of this unit. This application might be started here, but there are later units in 10th, 11th, and 12th grades which deal more specifically with the modes or functions of discourse:

Unit 1003 - The Language of Exposition
Unit 1102 - Persuasion
Unit 1103 - The Nature and Evaluation of Argument
Unit 1202 - The Language of Evocation
Unit 1203 - Social and Psychological Implications of Language
Unit 1204 - Evaluating Persuasive Discourse

In this and the above units, a spirit of tentativeness and inquiry on the part of students and teacher alike is most important. In the light of this emphasis, the unit places very little value on prescribing technical terminology. Rather, the students should be encouraged to develop terminology and models through an inductive approach, and the teacher can provide the more technical terms later in the units. This tentativeness and the awareness that a theory of discourse must be carefully qualified may depend heavily upon the attitude of the teacher. Students should not be given the impression that there is one way of talking about discourse, or that there is one set of terms that encompasses all they might need to know in this area. Students should understand that we are often discussing these matters on a rather high level of abstraction, and that scholars have not been able to reach consensus on either the terminology or the subject matter in general. While the unit does include an attempt to construct a theoretical model of the functions of discourse, it should be viewed as a model--not as a prescribed formula.

(Throughout the unit, as students work with particular modes or functions of discourse, you might wish to assign original papers in which student are to use techniques characteristic of the mode or function being studied at the time. Similar assignments are suggested at the end of the unit.)

TO THE TEACHER

Procedures, Sample Discussion Questions, Sample Introductions, Sample Transitions and Sample Summaries are supplied for your guidance. It is assumed that you will adapt these to your own classes and students. You might also wish to replace or supplement the reading selections with more current examples. Likely answers to some of the discussion questions are indicated in parentheses.

Special attention should be paid to the places in the unit in which the word ATTENTION is used. This serves to call your attention to specific kinds of generalizations which might be drawn at this point.

CONTENT OUTLINE

I. Introductory activities

   A. Students read and discuss five selections demonstrating differing language purposes

      1. Language to inform
      2. Language to inquire
      3. Language to persuade
      4. Language to establish social contact
      5. Language to evoke

   B. Formulation of tentative questions about the range of discourse purposes and techniques

   C. Review of relevant material from Unit 1001, The Nature of Meaning in Language

II. Formulating a model of the modes or functions of discourse

   A. Establishing a continuum to show the range from referential to evocative discourse

   B. Addition of the most common or pragmatic-referential use of language, the category embracing the widest range of language activity

   C. Attempting to draw distinctions between the modes of discourse, especially exposition and persuasion

   D. Necessary qualifications or reservations concerning the use of the model

      1. Overlap and multiplicity of function

      2. Semantic differences between encoder and decoder

III. Synthesizing questions and evaluations, establishing the relations between this material, the material in later units, and the application to the students' use of discourse.

Sample Introduction

Until now the study of language has most often involved the study of specific linguistic matters--usually sounds, words and sentences. For this unit, The Modes and Functions of Discourse, we're going to be looking at larger samples of language in its varied uses. Actually, this unit will be quite short, since it serves mainly as an introduction to several later units.

For the next day or so, you are going to be reading and discussing five short examples of discourse. We'll be discussing each one as we go along, but I want you to keep some general questions in mind as you read all of them.

1. What is the central purpose of the selection?
2. In what ways is the manner in which it is written related to the purpose for which it is intended?
3. How do the different styles or approaches reflect the different purposes?

ATTENTION

Important Generalization

Don't expect to be able to fully answer any one of these questions. In all honesty, I would have to say that there may not be answers in the usual sense of the word; I would certainly say that we can't expect to find single answers. All of this material operates on an assumption on my part--the assumption that the rhetorically sensitive write or speaker adapts his language to different situations in order to achieve the best effect. Much of our later discussions will be centering around this assumption checking it, qualifying it, and trying to apply it

to the kinds of writing and speaking situations. As we go through this unit, I hope you will not try to rely upon me for the answers. If you look at any textbook dealing with discourse, you are quite likely to find a full set of terms that students are expected to learn. Look at another text, and you'll probably find some disagreement over which terms should be used. In this unit you try to find a set of terms that will work for your purposes. I'll make some suggestions, but they will be suggestions, and I'll try to give you the specialized terms that have become widely accepted when the need arises.

The first selection is taken from a book called Roots for a New Rhetoric. The title you have is "The Story of Rhetoric," and I should tell you that this is only a very small part of that chapter.

Procedure:

Pass out copies of a portion of Daniel Fogarty's discussion of the story of rhetoric in Roots for a New Rhetoric. The section beginning "Even before the first written tehne" and ending with "argumentation even further" is suggested.

Sample Discussion Questions

Discuss:

1. What is the apparent purpose of this selection?

   (Historical sketch)

2. Where would you expect to find written discourse of this type.

   (History books, textbooks, encyclopedias, etc.)

3. Where could you find spoken discourse similar to this?

   (Classroom lectures, television documentaries, etc.)

4. What kind of evidence could you cite to show that this write is not trying to arouse the emotions of his readers?

   (Stress on factual statements, usually carefully qualified. Absence of connotative manings and main emphasis on denotation.)

Discussion Questions Continued

5. Is there any reason to feel that we should question or disagree with this writer?

   (Not unless we know of significantly different information on the same topic.)

6. Can you think of any general label that we could apply to language use of this type?

   (Students may suggest several, including INFORMATIVE and EXPOSITORY. At this point in the unit, try to establish the category "language to inform." Later in the unit, "exposition" will be used in a somewhat more general sense.)

All right, now that we've looked at just one example of the use of language to inform. Let's move on to the next selection. Consider the same kinds of questions when you read this excerpt, the opening remarks from Northrop Frye's book, The Educated Imagination.

Procedure:

Pass out copies of the paragraph from Northrop Frye's The Educated Imagination beginning with "For the past twenty five years" and ending with "thinking about the questions." (pp. 13-14) Allow class time for reading.

Sample Discussion Questions

Discuss:

1. What seems to be this author's purpose? I think you might find this one somewhat more complex than the last one.

   (Obviously he is asking questions, but it is quite clear that the asking of these question is intended to lead to something else.)

2. Perhaps it would help to discuss the purpose on a few different levels...

   (In one sense, he is merely asking questions. In another sense, he is asking questions that set up some of the lines of inquiry we might expect to see in the rest of the book. In a third sense, this author is asking questions that a high school student might also ask, often with a certain amount of negative criticism in mind. This might lead us to suggest that he is trying to persuade.)

NOTE: Some students might have considerable difficulty seeing this on all three levels, so the teacher might have to provide additional help.

3. All right, we might tentatively say that this writer is using language to inquire, but we might also say that there could be more to it than that. He does talk briefly about the possibilities for answers to his question; do you see any similarities with anything that has gone on in this class recently?

   (Fry is doing essentially the same thing the teacher did at the very beginning of this unit.)

4. While this selection does, in fact show language to inquire, there might be other examples that you could find; do you have any idea where you might expect to see this function of language?

   (Inquiry is sometimes seen on the editorial page of a newspaper, but these also are often aimed at something beyond simply asking the question. In some newspapers and periodicals, there are columns that specialize in the answering of questions.)

5. Can you think of any practical situations in which you would be likely to use language to inquire?

   (Letters of inquiry to employers, businesses, service agencies, etc.)

We've only looked at two selections, and we've already run into a few problems with our labels. The categories we set up to talk about language do not always stay as neatly separate as some would like. The next reading should add even more complexity to this. This is a part of a press conference of John F. Kennedy, shortly after several large steel companies had announced increases in their prices.

Procedure:

Pass out copies of "Steel Prices and The Public Interest" by John F. Kennedy found in The Burden and The Glory, ed. Allan Nevins.

Sample Discussion Questions

Discuss:

1. How would you interpret the purpose of this selection?

   (To criticize the steel executive responsible for the price increase, especially by alienating them from the rest of the society. Ultimately to put enough pressure on the steel industry to get them to cancel the price increase. Essentially he is trying to put this pressure on by martialling public opinion against the industry.)

2. Would you say that Kennedy's purpose for the general public is any different from his purpose with th stell executives?

   (He's trying to persuade the public, but his purpose with the steel executive borders more on coercion.)

3. What immediate clues can we point to that suggest this is a persuasive speech?

   (The strongly worded claims, the use of evidence to support those claims, the use of connotation as well as denotation.)

4. Some textbook writers stress that persuasion can be aimed at either actions or opinions; does Kennedy make any request for action in this speech?

   (No, this is more a public declaration of position than a request for action. He is obviously seeking to change or reinforce an opinion.)

5. Can you find any elements of language to inform in this speech?

   (The announcement of the price increase is somewhat informative, but it's also persuasive. The use of facts looks much like language to inform, but again, this is used for supporting his persuasive claims.)

NOTE: This speech can be found on several of the commemorative recordings of Kennedy's speeches. If this is available, Kennedy's frequent approach of delivering heavily persuasive speeches in a relatively "informal" style would become more apparent to the students.

Up to this point, we've looked at language to inform, inquire, and persuade. The Kennedy speech is a fiarly good illustration of the problems we have when we try to label a piece of discourse.

Nevertheless, even though our labels aren't exclusively categorical, it's necessary to set up some terminology for talking about discourse. The problem is that we have to learn how to properly handle the terminology. In the case of the Kennedy speech, it would be a gross error to maintain that persuasion is the only label that can be profitably used, since, as you pointed out, he uses informative language to support his case.

The next selection you will be reading comes from a much older speech, delivered in 1886 by a southern newspaper editor named Henry Grady. Grady was speaking to prominent New England group, and if you know anything about the antagonism between the North and the South during the Reconstruction period, it should be obvious to you that Grady was speaking to an audience which was at least indifferent, if not openly hostile, to him. If you add to this fact that "Marching Through Georgia" was sung immediately before Grady rose to speak, the situation should become quite clear to you.

The last selection is a poem by Stephen Crane. Again ask the same questions about this selection that you have asked about the others.

Procedure:

Pass out copies of Stephen Crane's "War Is Kind" and allow class time for reading.

Discussion Questions

Discuss:

1. As you did with the others, analyze the purpose in this selection; this is probably more difficult than the others.

   (This particular poem, after describing the horrors of war, keeps returning to the ironic refrain, "War is kind." Crane could be expressing his own feelings about war, or he might also be trying to persuade the reader to feel the same way.)

2. Suppose we discuss this in terms of experience; what kind of experience do you sense on the part of the poet?

   (Horrifying, bitter, ugly, angry)

3. How does Crane's experience relate to your own as you read the poem?

   (Most students will probably have essentially the same reaction in this case.)

4. How does he communicate this experience to you?

   (The ironic, sarcastic attitude is suggested immediately by the first line. The use of sounds, colors, feelings and actions very directly suggests the scene. The heavy use of connotation helps to communicate the experience.)

In the Crane poem, the use of language, especially with the details of the scene, helps communicate the poet's experience to the reader. The poet has an experience to write about, he puts it into linguistic terms, and the reader, through the language symbols, is lead to his own experience, more or less similar to the poet's. Through language, the poet is able to EVOKE an emotional response on the part of his readers.

We have read and discussed five major functions of language: language to inform, inquire, persuade, establish social contact, and evoke. In our very brief discussions, we have been able to find some of the major differences in language used for these functions, but we have barely scratched the surface. As yet we don't have many concrete suggestions for handling discourse for various purposes. We haven't yet asked many specific questions. We haven't asked one of the most important questions to you--"What good is all

of this?" Now that we have a very general survey, though, we can begin to focus more specifically on problems, questions, and applications.

Suggested Assignment

1. Before our next class, make a list of important questions about the range of discourse and the language adaptations we have discussed so far. I want your questions to center on the problem of finding definite differences between the modes or functions--differences which would be of use to the user of language. You will be able to base many of these questions on the problems of meaning that we discussed in the previous language unit. These should be carefully worded, and they should lend to profitable class discussions.

2. Along with your list of questions, try to answer the question, "What good is the study of this material?" I realize that you don't have time for a complete paper, but I think you should be able to sketch out some rough ideas. At this point in the unit, you may have difficulty finding these answer; I expect that. Difficult or not, the questions should at least be asked now.

Note on Further Discussion:

Since student responses will vary greatly, only a few of the most obvious questions will be discussed in the following section of the unit. It is recommended that you choose the most relevant questions and responses of students, duplicate them, and distribute them to the class. These should provide an excellent base for discussion although it is likely that some of the questions will be difficult or impossible to answer. Highly detailed matters should be kept for later, more detailed, units on discourse mentioned in the introduction to the unit.

Sample Questions and Discussions

NOTE: These are intended as examples of the kinds of point. The class discussions, as well as the questions themselves, will be much wider in range than those suggested here.

Question In what areas of language study are significant differences most likely to be found?

Discussion In general, we can find differences at all levels, from phonology all the way to expanded language structures. Realizing that we are likely to find exceptions frequently, we could show major differences in intonation patterns, sentence forms, the use of modifiers semantic responses, and the larger patterns of organization, to name a few. We could probably generalize that most of the difference in sentence structure and phonology are already intuitively used, while semantic and organizational differences might not be so apparent.

Question How is the process of meaning related to this?

Discussion Again, while we can certainly find exceptions, the relationship between the word and its referent would normally be quite close in informative discourse; there is often an attempt to limit this is a one-to-one relation. Moving to persuasive and evocative language, we would expect a rather deliberate attempt to avoid limiting the word-referent relationship to one-to-one, preferring, instead, an open-ended response. (Ask the students for examples.)

Question Why should we learn all of this?

Discussion Different situations and different purposes make different demands upon the writer or speaker. Effective adaptation to the situation would have to be one of the major reasons for studying this.

Question Are we to assume that skilled writers and speakers actually plan all these adaptations before they write or speak?

Discussion Any attempt to answer this question would have to be carefully handled, since there is considerable variation, and we would need to examine the particular writer or speaker in question. In all probability, most skilled users of discourse do not consciously plan in as detailed and terminology centered a manner as we might use in class discussions. The background, training, and experience of skilled writers or speakers might, in fact, allow them to appropriately structure their discourse intuitively. We can often see clearly structured, clearly organized arguments within a given piece of discourse, but it is quite to say with any certainty that the writer or speaker consciously planned it that way.

Sample Introduction

In units you will study later this year and in the eleventh and twelfth grades, you will be getting into some very detailed work with the larger patterns of organization or structure, working with discourse from all of the modes we have introduced here. You won't, however, do as much work with the differences in the

process of meaning, so we should review some of the material you have studied this year already. When we were talking about the nature of meaning, we did use quite a few examples of language in discourse to illustrate varieties of meaning, but we didn't study the relationships between meaning and the different types of dis course in any systematized fashion. Since this is one of the fundamental areas in which language differs according to purpose, we ought to at least try to apply it to this unit.

Sample Discussion Questions

Discuss:

1. Recalling our discussions of sematics and especially your reading of the Hayakawa article, what was the definition of semantics?

   (The study of human responses to language.)

2. Do you remember why Hayakawa didn't like the definition, "the science of the meaning of words?"

   (This doesn't adequately emphasize that meaning is more than the dictionary definitions--that meaning depends upon what the person does with the words.)

3. In the meaning unit, we talked about the difference between signs and symbols; do you remember the distinctions we made?

   (The sign indicates the presence of the referent while the symbol leads the human being to think about the referent.)

4. All right, then what is the difference between a signal response and a symbol response?

   (The signal response is immediate and unthinking. The symbol response requires though, transfer of experience, etc. It is reflective.)

5. Getting back to a basic distinction we made, what did we say about the relation between the word and the referent?

   (The word can either signify or symbolize the thing referred to, but the word is not the same as the referent. We discussed the problems in mistaking the word for the thing, giving the linguistic symbol the attributes of the things symbolized.)

6. By now, hopefully, you should be starting to recognize some of the basic relationships between the process of meaning and themodes or functions of discourse. I'd like you to suggest these, and we'll discuss them as is necessary.

   (Generally speaking, informative discourse attempts to avoid signal responses--to avoid emotionally based connotations. The writer tries to limit the semantic response of his reader by using language that has clear, fairly definite referents. In short, he tries to use denotative language as much as possible. He tries to use language to avoid the personal and emotional responses of particular readers or audiences, and instead uses generally or publically discriminable referents.)

   (On the other hand, the user of persuasive and evocative language tries to make use of the emotions, the backgrounds, or in short, the connotations present in his audience. He will deliberately use language that evokes a personal response from his audience. He might be aiming at either signal or symbol responses, but in either case, he will not usually try to limit the possible word-referent relationships. This should be qualified, however, that he may, as in the case of the Kennedy speech, use a variety of approaches, possibly using informative language to support the persuasive claim.)

Sample Introduction: Beginning attempts at a model of discourse modes.

In order to have a frame of reference for our later discussions and for later units, I think we now have enough ideas to begin constructing a model that we can work from. I'd like to emphasize that anything we set up must be seen as a model, as a basic form that we can use for further discussion. No model that we create here can be reasonably seen as an accurate reflection of

Important: Lectures and discussions relating to the discourse model may require additional time. The treatment suggested in the unit should be seen as a minimum framework.

reality, and I think we should admit our limitations before we start. Again, we are working here on a very high level of abstraction, and when we get down to specific and practical cases, we'll need to make some reservations about the use of our model.

Let's start our model by showing its widest dimensions, we can fill in the material between the poles as we go along. If we draw a continuum, a line on which we can show relative values, we would have to put language to inform at one end and language to evoke at the other:

Informative _____ Evocative

As we set up this diagram or model, we need some kind of justification for drawing it as we do. In what ways can we justify the placement of these functions of discourse at the poles of the continuum.

NOTE: The teacher may find it necessary to restate or paraphrase the students' responses to approximate these comments.

(Informative language is the most publically based of the five functions we discussed, while evocative language is the most personally or individually based.

Informative language makes heavy use of denotative meaning, while evocative language makes heavier use of connotative meaning. Informative leanguage usually strives for a limited word-referent relationship, while evocative language deliberately allows for many possible referents for one word.)

I said earlier that we were going to be operating on a high level of abstraction, and at this point I'd like to add a term that we can use on a theoretical level. Using the same diagram, and keeping in mind the primary

linguistic function, REFERENCE, I'm going to change the terminolgoy at the left end to "PURE REFERENCE."

Pure Reference ——— Evocative Reference - - - - -

I stressed the idea that this was theoretical, because pure reference would be most difficult to achieve in language as we usually think of it. This would mean that we would have a perfect one-to-one relationship between word and referent, and from what you read about semantics you might remember that the semanticist would consider this as very improbable, since every person might have a somewhat different response caused by different experiences in the past. We should say, however, that the ideal of the semanticists has often been the ability to use language close to this end of the continuum. Whether we can get this kind of reference or not, it does provide a concrete starting point for the model. We haven't thrown out the term "informative language," by the way; pure reference could still be called informative, but the general category of informative language is too broad to put at one point on the end of the scale. As I think you can already see, we could find language use further along the scale that could be classified as informative.

Students should have a clear understanding of the relationships between the terms "informative language" and "pure reference."

By adding "pure reference" to the model, we have a specific point from which to work, so we show the continuum with a definite end. However, at the other end

Construction of Discourse Model

of this continuum, we can't say that evocative language must occupy one single point. It's obviously more ranging than that. This is why I just continued the continuum with the broken line.

This gives us a start toward our model, but I want you to attack it now. What is the major weakness of the model as I have it drawn now?

NOTE: Again, the teacher may need to paraphrase the comments of students to approximate this.

(The model of discourse we are trying to set up should show all the modes or functions. As it is, this model shows only the extremes, and the most common forms of discourse are not shown. At one end, we have only a theoretical point, and at the other end we have a function that is impossible to pinpoint.)

What we have, then, are the opposite poles of the model, but this statement should be made very carefully; later in the unit we'll be looking at some discourse that should make it obvious that we cannot always consider these as being diametrically opposed to each other. For now, however, we'll assume that these modes of discourse can be theoretically discussed as opposites. Since we recognize that the notion of purely referential language is probably highly theoretical and difficult to achieve on a practical level, we would have to find some way of dealing with all the discourse that falls somewhere between this theoretical point and the mode of discourse at the other end of the continuum--evocative reference. Somewhere between these extremes, we need to find ways of talking about the vast majority of the discourse with which we're most familiar--discourse which is primarily concerned with practical matters.

If we used the five examples of discourse you read in the beginning of this unit, it's obvious that the terms "Pure Reference" and "Evocative Reference" are not adequate as labels for all five. We've already identified the excerpt using language to inform, "The Story of Rhetoric," as being somewhere near our "Pure Reference" end of the continuum, and the Crane poem, "War is Kind," has already been labeled as evocation. Now I've introduced the notion of practical discourse, and we have to show this in the model.

Sample Discussion

1. Would we be justified in calling "War is Kind" practical discourse?

   (Only in a qualified, reserved manner. We might be able to make the case thatCrane is trying to persuade people to feel as he suggests about war, but with only the poem before us, this would be most difficult to prove. Without further evidence, it would only be conjecture to attribute this motive to Crane; he could be expressing his own feelings without the intent to persuade.)

2. Would we be justified in calling "The Story of Rhetoric" practical discourse?

   (Yes. While it would be difficult to say that Fogarty is trying to get his reader to rush out and do something after reading this section, we could say with some certainty that he is trying to teach his reader something, and in this sense it would be practical discourse.)

3. Suppose we could find some discourse that could be placed within the area of pure reference; would this be likely to be practical discourse?

   (It might be practical, with a very definite and useful purpose, but it might also fall within the category of "pure science" with no definite and practical purpose. In this case the main purpose would be to gain knowledge or modify knowledge, and the more practical applied science might develop from it.)

Sample Lecture

While we could probably get along reasonably well with the term "practical" discourse, the term more frequently used by scholars and textbooks is "pragmatic" discourse, and we might as well keep our model somewhat consistent with that used by the students of discourse. The term "pragmatic" suggests action more than the term "practical." Something could be practical without any action taking place, but we usually think of pragmatism as active.

By introducing the term "pragmatic discourse" we are introducing another possible term for the model, but I don't think it should be particularly difficult to see that this term is rather general. At least four, and even possibly five of the excerpts read so far could be pragmatic. For the moment, let's consider the Crane poem as being outside the realm of pragmatic discourse but this still leaves us with four pieces of discourse that might be considered pragmatic. The point is that these are not identical with four pieces of discourse that might be considered pragamatic. The point is that these are not identical approaches; they may have pragmatic ends, but they all use different means to reach that end. So if our model is going to tell us something about discourse and if we are to be able to effectively talk about the modes or functions of discourse we are going to need more specific terms to deal with these differences.

Excerpt #1

The Structure of Grass

Agnes Chase

Of all the plants the grasses are the most important to man. all our bread-stuffs--corn, wheat, oats, rye, barley--and rice and sugarcane are grasses. Bamboos are grasses, and so are the Kentucky bluegrass and creeping bent of our lawns, the timothy and redtop of our meadows.

If such different-looking plants as bamboo, corn, and timothy are all grasses, what is it that characterizes a grass? It is the structure of the plant.

All grasses have stems with solid joints and two-ranked leaves, one at each joint. The leaves consist of two parts, the sheath, which fits around the stem like a split tube, and the blade, which commonly is long and narrow. No other plant family has just this structure.

From Grass: Yearbook of Agriculture, 1948, U S. Government Printing Office.

Procedure:

Pass out Excerpt #1

I want you to keep the Fogarty excerpt in mind, and you might find it helpful to reread it. I'm going to give you one other shortitem to read that is roughly comparable. Again the central question I want you to ask is "What can I conclude about the purpose of the item by looking at the language in it?"

NOTE: In discussions of these excerpts and in subsequent discussions, you will probably wish to ask for more examples and specific references to the texts than those suggested in the unit.

Sample Discussion

1. Is there anything that these excerpts have in common?

   (They are all informative.)

2. Basing your comments on the word-referent relationships in these examples, what indications lead you to the conclusion that they are all informative?

   (In both there is a definite and careful attempt to limit the word-referent relationship fairly specifically. All three quite obviously stay away from emotional connotations.)

3. Give me some examples of words pointing to definite referents in these excerpts.

   (Fogarty gives us synonyms for techne three times, each time he used the word. Chase very carefully identifies the structural characteristics of grass for the purpose of classification.)

Sample Summary

Now we have a subordinate term within the area of pragmatic discourse. Both of these items made use of the pointing function of language. In all three cases, there were attempts to specifically direct the reader's attention to identifiable referents. To use another term, we can say that this kind of language DESIGNATES, and we'll put this term on the model within the range of PRAGMATIC REFERENCE.

PURE REFERENCE — PRAGMATIC REFERENCE — EVOCATIVE REFERENCE

Designates

Procedure: Pass out copies of "The Bride's Dress for The Wedding." from Amy Vanderbilt's Complete Book of Etiquette and Sterling Moss' "On a Track with Two Thoro-breds"in The Automobile Quarterly, Fall, 1964.

Here are two other examples of informative and pragmatic discourse that I think you'll find slightly different from the three we just finished. Again, I want you to judge intent by looking at the language used.

1. Let's take the Vanderbilt excerpt first; is the designative function of language found in this excerpt?

   (Yes. She describes the different types of wedding dresses and situations fairly specifically.)

2. In this case, could we say that the author stops at the designative function, or does she go further?

   (She designates the types of dresses and then takes it one step further, judging which type is appropriate in a given situation. In other words, she describes alternatives and makes judgments about the proper alternatives totake.)

3. Do you see any similarities between this and the article by Stirling Moss?

   (Yes. Moss also describes the subjects of his article, and he also goes further, making relative judgments about the two racing cars.)

4. Would you say that both of these articles are highly pragmatic in intent?

   (No. The Vanderbilt article has a much more definite practical purpose--telling the bride which kind of dress she should wear. We could harly say that Moss is telling his readers which kind of car to drive, since it would be most unlikely that these vintage racing cars would be available for the general public to drive. His article is in some ways similar to the historical treatment of rhetoric in the Fogarty excerpt. The Moss article is intended as interesting information for a select audience and in some ways it is probably less pragmatic than Fogarty's.)

Sample Summary

We can still agree, then, that the designative function is still found in these two articles, but we also agree that another function is apparent--the making of value judgments about the referents. This, then, gives us another function that should be shown on the model.

PURE REFERENCE — PRAGMATIC REFERENCE — EVOCATIVE REFERENCE

Designates Evaluates

Procedure: Pass out copies of "The City--A Cause for Statesmanship" by Adlai Stevenson from The Speakers' Resource Book (Chicago, Scott Foresman and Co., 1961.)

The examples I want you to read next is a speech by Adlai Stevenson. Stevenson was quoted as saying, "My basic purpose in speaking is to inform." While you're reading this speech, you might ask yourself if this speech is representative of informative language. You might also keep in mind the Kennedy speech on steel prices.

1. Can you find any examples of the designative function of language in this speech?

   (Yes. Throughout the speech there are specific references to legislation, specific problem areas, and people, including the speaker himself.)

2. Are there any examples of the evaluative function of language?

   (Yes. Again, throughout the speech, as Stevenson refers to specific problems and specific programs, he makes value judgments about the need for new programs and about the work of existing programs.)

   (He also makes a number of value judgments about himself.)

3. In this particular speech, you should be able to see a function we haven't talked about for a while; what functions are served the several remarks Stevenson makes about his qualifications?

(He avoids the impression that he is an expert in the particular field, and he tries to establish rapport with the audience, primarily through humor aimed at himself.)

4. All right, would you say that Stevenson is primarily concerned with using language to inform?

   (This is difficult to say with certainty, but the persuasive intent is rather strongly suggested.)

5. If we accepted the idea that Stevenson is trying to persuade, what would be the thesis statement he is using?

   (Governmental support of urban development is clearly needed, but such programs must be carefully planned and cooperatively carried out.)

6. We've been considering pragmatic discourse for some time now, and obviously this is pragmatic in direction. The problem is that pragmatism, like some other terms we have used, is a rather general term. If Stevenson could have his way with the audience, what would he have the people do?

   (He would like them to agree with the principles he is advocating, and he would like them, as members of a group with interests in urban development, to put these principles into practice.)

Sample Lecture

I hope it has become obvious to you that the discourse we have been working with has become more and more complicated in terms of our model. With the stevenson speech, we have a persuasive speech intended to convince and to incite to action, but the speech makes considerable use of both designation and evaluation to accomplish these purposes. As far as the model is concerned, we could put the functions of convincing and inciting in a relative position with the others, but if we use the term "persuasion," it is clear that it involves theuse of several functions of language, and that it cannot be placed at any finite point on a theoretical model. We can show the convincing and inciting functions

like this:

PURE REFERENCE	PRAGMATIC	REFERENCE	EVOCATIVE REFERENCE
Designates	Evaluates	Convinces or Incites	Evokes

The problem for the model now is what to do with persuasion. Certainly persuasion is one of the most frequent uses of language, and we probably could construct a fiarly good case for Aristotle's notice that persuasion pervades all language use. For our purposes, though, I think we'd find it more helpful to limit persuasion somewhat, so that we can talk about it.

Remembering that we are, for the moment, concerning ourselves only with the intent and purposes of the writer or speaker, we've run into some difficult matters for the model. At the beginning of the unit we talked about the functions of informing, persuading and evoking. We talked about inquiring and establishing social contact too, but these are, I think, less important to the model than the other three. Informing, persuading and evoking are more to us than simply functions of language. They are functions, but we can also think of them as primary types of language use--as modes of discourse. Then within the modes we can set up, there are varying functions that might be served by the type or mode. The functions can be thought of as parts of the modes. As we can see very easily in the Stevenson speech, a piece of discourse

that properly belongs in the mode of persuasion can make use of several functions of language. The functions are already shown on the model, and one of the general modes, EVOCATION, is already suggested. Now the problem becomes that of distinguishing between the mode, PERSUASION, and the informative mode which is popularly labeled EXPOSITION.

Sample Discussion

1. How can we set up a distinction between the two; can we use the interpretation that exposition tells us something and persuasion tries to get us to do something?

   (No. We've already talked about the general matter of pragmatic purpose, and it becomes most difficult to draw the line between these two on pragmatic grounds.)

2. If we can't justifiably use the pragmatic distinction, do you have any other ideas?

   (Students will probably be unable to come up with any others. They might suggest the distinction that exposition is reasoned discourse, while persuasion is limited to suggested discourse, but this view of persuasion is not held widely today. As we usually think of it, persuasion is much more than suggestion alone.)

Sample Lecture

Important Definition

The distinction that is quite widely held by the people who study discourse hinges on the matter of controversy, and I doubt that you've thought about this particular ideas as yet. The distinction that is being made be these people is that <u>exposition is the mode of discourse that lied outside the arena of controversy</u>. Briefly summarized, this means that there is no obvious or stated opposition to the point of view of the writer or speaker. There might be disagreement beneath the surface, but until it becomes open or overt controversy,

the discourse can be considered exposition. The examples you read earlier could be applied to this. As far as we know, nobody is arguing with Fogarty about the first techne that was written. We don't know that anyone is arguing with Amy Vanderbilt about the proper dress for the wedding. No one, at least as far as we know, is disagreeing with the Corvette Manual about the proper way to diagnose hydraulic valve lifter problems, and Stirling Moss doesn't seem to be arguing against any open opposition to his road test of the two racing cars. Now, quite possibly someone could disagree with any one of these overtly. Then we could tell that someone says he's all wrong about the handling qualities of the Bugatti. If Moss, knowing that someone disagrees, would rewrite the article, trying to convince us that his response is more accurate and knowledgeable, then we could say that we have persuasive discourse.

Now if we turned this matter around and looked at the discourse we have labeled as persuasive, we can apply the distinction that persuasion is discourse that is within the arena of overt controversy. In both the Kennedy speech and the Stevenson speech, it is not difficult to see that there is some opposition to the ideas of the speakers. In both cases, and especially in the Kennedy speech, you can find the speaker actually referring to his opposition--sometimes directly, and sometimes indirectly--and trying to refute their arguments. This raises a very important question. If we can't identify the opposition to a piece of discourse clearly, does

it mean that it must necessarily be exposition?

NOTE: Although student discussion will probably range greatly, some students might, in the course of the discussion reach conclusion similar to this one. If this does not happen, the teacher will have to ask additional questions and provide some suggestions for students to discuss.

(No. For one thing, it could be evocation; one usually doesn't get the impression that the literary artist is facing overt opposition. This is fairly obvious, but it doesn't answer the question with discourse that is somewhere within exposition or persuasion. Discourse could be persuasive to some and expository to others. Or it might be that we simply don't recognize a raging controversy. Sometimes the style in which a piece of discourse is written or the substance of the discourse itself will suggest that there must be some opposition. This would be difficult to judge, so any conclusions would have to be tentative and should suggest further study into the matter before coming to more permanent conclusion.)

Adding this distinction based on controversy to separate two of the primary modes of discourse, exposition and persuasion, we'll need to make some additions to the model:

PURE REFERENCE	PRAGMATIC	REFERENCE	EVOCATIVE REFERENCE
Designates	Evaluates	Convinces or Incites	Evokes

EXPOSITION
Removed from the arena of overt controversy

PERSUASION
Within the arena of overt controversy

Sample Lecture

We'll be returning to persuasion in a few days, but first I want to cover the final part of the model, evocation. So far, you've only seen one example of discourse which is primarily evocative, although we certainly would have to say that Kennedy evokes some emotional reactions in his audience by the choice of words to describe the steel company executives. Drawing

only from the Crane poem and the Kennedy speech, however, we don't get a very complete picture of the evocative mode. Evocation is more than the process of stirring up the emotions of the reader or listener, although certainly this is one of the things evocation does. With the Kennedy speech, you can see that evocation can be used pragmatically; the speaker can evoke certain responses from his listeners for very practical purposes. On the other hand, you'll remember that it was impossible to definitely say that the Crane poem, "War is Kind," was intended to be persuasive discourse. Perhaps the best way to clarify this would be to read another piece of evocative discourse.

Procedure: Pass out Excerpt #2 and allow class time for reading.

Sample Discussion Questions

Discuss:

1. How does Hatch suggest the direction of his article?

   (He begins by stating that fishing is more than the "pursuit of shadowy creatures.")

2. How does the discourse model we have constructed relate to Hatch's opening sentence?

   (He immediately tells us that his view of fishing is based on more than "pure reference"; if his only definition were stated as the sentence, ommitting "not alone", this would be no more than designative.)

3. If Hatch's response to fishing involves more than the attempt to catch fish, what kinds of responses is he talking about?

   (the pleasant, leisurely experience that might be associated with fishing.)

FISHING IS

Francis W. Hatch

Fishing is not alone the intelligent pursuit of shadowy creatures beneath the surface of still or hurrying waters.

Fishing is the discovery of pale pink arbutus, flowering in the shelter of an oak leaf. It is the flaming candelabra of a cardinal flower standing erect in a shadowed brook; the fragrance of a wild strawberry; or the shy beauty of an wild rose blooming in the root loop of a weather-beaten stump. Fishing is the awareness and enjoyment of these and other miracles, by the hundreds, along the varied margins of a water-course.

4. All right, if we accept the idea that he is responding to these experiences, what do you think Hatch wants us to do about it?

   (It's difficult to pinpoint a persuasive attempt here, but we could, perhaps, say that he wants the reader to respond to these experiences in the same ways that he does. If we denied this persuasive attempt, we could still say that he is trying to share these experiences with the reader.)

Sample Lecture

Centering for a minute on the notion of shared experience, I think we can profitably compare this excerpt to the poem by Crane. In both cases, there are experiences being described. Granted, the experiences in the poem are more indirectly described than in this excerpt, but the reader does, in a sense, "share" the writers' reactions. We should say here that this sharing might not be a direct, one-to-one relationship. Actually, we're talking about much the same kind of thing you may already have experienced in reading fiction. For some mysterious reasons, some authors seem to be able to completely involve you in their stories. The same could be said for movies, television, and plays; perhaps it hasn't been clear why it happens, but you find yourself "living the action." You get caught up in the book or program or movie, forgetting for a while that you are John Doe; you "become" Tom Sawyer or Huckleberry Finn. There are various terms for talking about this kind of thing. Some would say that you are <u>identifying</u> with a character; others might call the process <u>empathizing</u> with the characters or actions. <u>Identification</u> and <u>empathy</u> may not, in fact, be interchangeable terms, but whatever

terms you use to describe the phenomena, some writers can get through their reader's skins to the nerve endings.

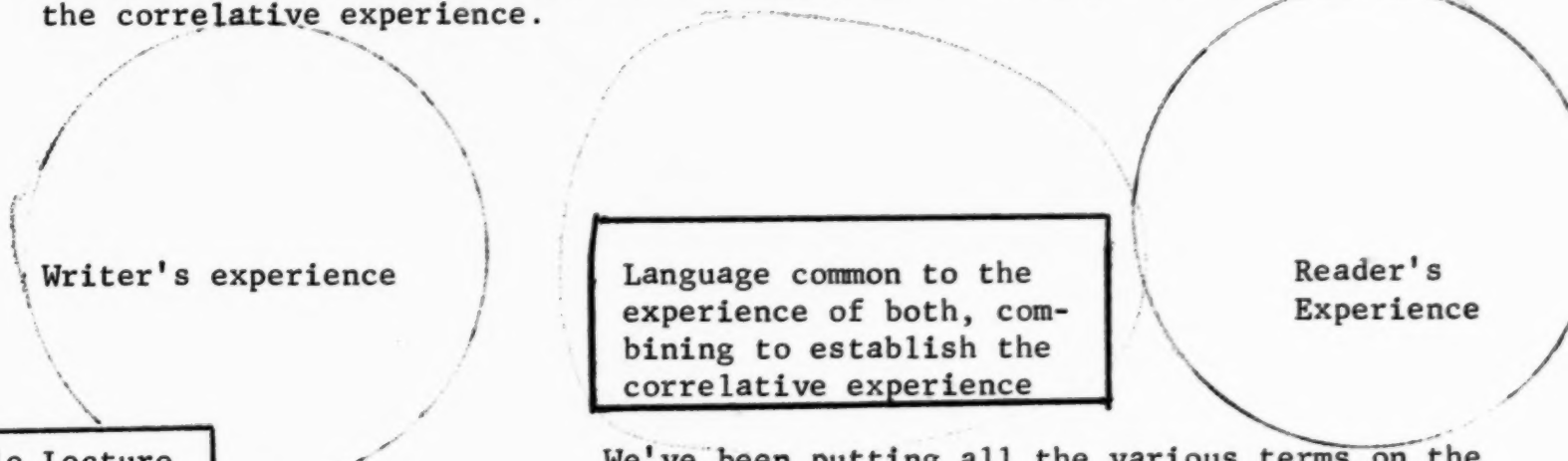
Some of you may have already read Stephen Crane's The Red Badge of Courage. I think you should be able to see this kind of thing happening. I'm going to give you two of the central chapters of this book--chapters which deal with a young man's confrontation with war.

Procedure: Pass out Chapters 6 & 7 of The Red Badge of Courage by Stephen Crane. Since this is a fairly long reading, you might wish to give an overnight assignment like the one suggested on page 32.

OPTIONAL ASSIGNMENT

Read both chapters as you would normally read a work of fiction. After your first reading, go back over the two chapters and list the words, phrases, or sentences that are particularly effective in helping you "share" the youth's experiences.

NOTE: If this assignment is used, at least part of the next class period should be devoted to students' responses. While students should be able to find the effective words, etc., they might not be able to say why these are effective. If this is the case, you might show, through the diagram below, how the writer communicates an unfamiliar experience by using suggestive words, phrases, or sentences that are within the readers' range of experience, and combining them in a way that evokes the correlative experience.


Writer's experience
Language common to the experience of both, combining to establish the correlative experience
Reader's Experience

Sample Lecture Continued

We've been putting all the various terms on the discourse model, and with the addition of EVOCATION, we complete the model:

PURE REFERENCE	PRAGMATIC REFERENCE		EVOCATIVE REFERENCE
Designates	Evaluates	Convinces or Incites	Evokes
EXPOSITION			
	PERSUASION		
			EVOCATION

NOTE: An overhead transparency of this model is included in the unit materials.

It's always easy to assign a particular place on a theoretical model like this, but we should be very cautious and reserved about the placement of evocation. In many ways, evocation is so wide ranging that it doesn't lend itself to easy diagramming. This is why

Sample Lecture
Continued

I've used the broken lines on the model. We're forced into the realization that highly designative language might have considerable powers of evocation. Here we have to come to grips with the differences in people's responses to language and to the referents of language. For example, a statement in a history text that approximately six million Jews were murdered in Nazi Germany is probably more factual and designative than Fogarty's discussion of the first techne in Ancient Greech, but the statement carries tremendous emotional weight as well, especially for someone who lost a relative in a concentration camp. In this case, the referenct of the expository language is so powerful that even pure reference would elicit some highly emotional reactions. This is the kind of qualification or reservation that must be made when we try to use a model; there are often important factors that can't be neatly shown, regardless of the construction of the model. In this spirit, you are forced to admit that it's very difficult to categorize something as strictly and exclusively expository or persuasive. On the other hand, it's quite obvious that there are differences; not all language use is identical, and if we are going to talk about the differences or the similarities we have to have a terminology for doing so. The result, then, is that our terminology must be well tempered by reasonable qualifications or reservations. We cannot

throw the terms around indiscriminately because we would be too frequently overstating or oversimplifying. One way we can talk reasonably about these matters is to recognize the many variations and talk in terms of central tendencies. In this way, we can feel justified in saying that the Stevenson speech involves persuasion as the central tendency, while we still recognize that he uses expository techniques at times.

Similarly, we can view out entire model in this way. The model represents the usual ways in which language operates. If you look into the etymology of the term "model," you'll find that it is closely tied to the term "mode," which means the most frequently occuring form in a group of similar and related forms. Consequently, the model of discourse does not presume to represent all discourse, but the most frequently occurring forms of discourse. When you learned before that the word is not the thing, you also learned a relationship that characterizes this model, which, like the word, is not the thing, but a representation of the thing.

To the Teacher

The four selection for student reading listed below are intended for student analysis using the final form of the model. In each selection students should be asked to discuss the ways in which the writers have manipulated the modes of discourse to meet the demands of the particular situations in which the discourse is used, especially as these manipulations are related to the writer's purposes, and as these manipulations are reflections of those purposes. In each case the students should be able to find expository, persuasive and evocative language in combination. Considerable attention should be paid to the possible reasons why these combinations are structured as they are. It is recommended that students read all four selections to see varying combinations being used. Several assignments might be used with these readings.

I. "A Modest Proposal" by Jonathan Swift
II. "Burplson Air Force Base" from Doctor Strangelove by Peter George
III. "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" by Martin Luther King
IV. "War Message" by Franklin Delano Roosevelt

1. Students write critical essays, showing the relationship between the modes of discourse in one of the selections.

2. Students compare the use of the modes of discourse in two or more of the selections.

3. Informal or structured discussions following each reading.

4. Students attempt to rewrite a section of one of the readings, focusing on the use of one mode of discourse and eliminating all reflections of the other modes. Following this, students should discuss the consequences of these changes.

5. Students write an original paper, using techniques from exposition, persuasion, and evocation in a structured, planned relationship.

6. If you have not already used the assignment with students, assign original papers using particular functions of discourse such as designating, evaluating, convincing, inciting and evoking. You might wish to use all of these as separate assignments, and in this case, the length of the papers should be short--perhaps no longer than one paragraph.

7. If time permits, students might be assigned speeches following the same pattern as #6.

Unit Examination

Directions:

After reading Roosevelt's speech, write a well-planned essay discussing the speech in terms of the discourse model constructed in class. You should pay particular attention to the ways in which Roosevelt uses the techniques of exposition, persuasion, and evocation. In your essay you should identify the uses of these modes of discourse and make appropriate evaluations of their use. An example of the kind of statement you might make is as follows:

> "That at least part of Roosevelt's purpose is to inform is rather obvious in the first sentence of the speech. Normally one would expect that the word 'yesterday' would be adequate for identifying the time of the incident, and certainly it must have been for Roosevelt's immediate audience. However, a President of the United States, speaking in a situation in which war is declared, is speaking for the history books as well as the immediate audience. On the other hand, Roosevelt tells the history books and his immediate audience much more than a date in this opening sentence. Using words like 'infamy,' 'suddenly,' and 'deliberately', Roosevelt begins to condemn the Japanese and justify the American action."